



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on HB2619
RELATING TO HOMEMADE FOOD PRODUCTS

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 02/13/2026, 09:00 am, 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined. This measure may impact the priorities identified in the
2 Governor's Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department's)
3 appropriations and personnel priorities.

4 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Services Division, Food Safety Branch
6 (EHSD-FSB) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 HB2619 seeks to provide regulatory clarity and increase economic opportunities by
8 extending the administrative rules adopted by the Department for home kitchens and
9 homemade food products to farm kitchens, while preserving the Department's authority to
10 ensure food safety. The measure seeks to accomplish this by mandating "farm kitchens" to be
11 treated identically to "home kitchens" with respect to the production and sale of homemade
12 food products. The Department supports the intent of this measure but has concerns regarding
13 the minimum requirements for kitchens that could be considered "farm kitchens".

14 The Department would like to clarify that with respect to homemade food products, the
15 Department does not consider land classifications when determining the applicability of the

1 homemade food product exemption. Home kitchens on agricultural parcels are treated
2 identically to home kitchens that are not on agricultural parcels.

3 In 2025, the Department broadened the exemption for the production and sale of
4 homemade foods in Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) Chapter 11-50, as directed by Act 195,
5 SLH 2024. The updated HAR allows qualifying homemade foods to be produced and sold from a
6 “home kitchen”. “Home kitchens” are defined in the HAR as “a kitchen designed and intended
7 for use by the residents of a home.” This definition implies a reasonable assumption of
8 homemade food products being produced in kitchens designed and constructed for food
9 preparation and having the conditions that allow for the allowable foods to be made safely.

10 As drafted, HB2619 defines “farm kitchen” as a kitchen located on agricultural land but
11 does not define minimum standards for a “farm kitchen” or whether the kitchen must be
12 intentionally designed, constructed, and dedicated to food preparation as a home kitchen
13 would be. The Department respectfully requests clarification of the definition of a farm kitchen
14 to ensure that farm kitchens include necessary appurtenances (e.g. clean water, sinks, etc.) or
15 sanitation to safely produce food.

16

17

18 **Offered Amendments:** None

19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*
Jill Tamura, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Health
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 13, 2026
TIME: 9am

RE: HB2229 Relating to Homemade Food Products
Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure to provide regulatory clarity and increase economic opportunities by making the department of health's administrative rules for home kitchens and homemade food products applicable to farm kitchens, while preserving the department's authority to ensure food safety.

As the measure notes, homemade food product operations provide important opportunities for small scale food producers to participate in local food systems while maintaining public health protections, and many small farms prepare value-added food products in kitchens located on their farms.

Making the rules for home kitchens applicable to farm kitchens is a logical way to encourage increased local food production. We urge the Committee and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 13, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TESTIMONY ON HB 2619
RELATING TO HOMEMADE FOOD PRODUCTS

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Keohokapu-Ley Loy, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports the intent of HB 2619, which requires the Department of Health to adopt rules to authorize and regulate farm kitchens on the same basis as home kitchens producing homemade food products.

As production costs continue to rise, increases in farm revenues and profitability are critical to the continued viability of Hawai'i's farms and ranches. One important pathway is the ability to add value to raw agricultural products. Off-grade and excess production are often lost due to market conditions. Converting these products into value-added goods can increase farm revenue, reduce waste, create new business opportunities, and expand access to locally produced food.

Authorizing farm kitchens provides farmers with additional flexibility to diversify their operations and incorporate value-added products as another revenue stream. This approach supports local food systems, rural entrepreneurship, and Hawai'i's goals of increased food self-sufficiency and economic resilience.

HFB encourages clear, workable rules that recognize the unique operating conditions of farms while maintaining appropriate food safety standards. As in prior discussions regarding cottage food operations, we support non-potentially hazardous food products and defer to the Department of Health regarding standards for potentially hazardous foods to ensure public health protections remain strong and clear.

We look forward to continued collaboration to ensure that farm kitchens provide meaningful economic opportunity while maintaining consumer confidence and food safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Feb. 13, 2026, 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2619 — RELATING TO HOMEMADE FOOD PRODUCTS

Aloha chair, vice chair and other members of the committees,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB2619](#), which would require the Department of Health to treat farm kitchens no differently than it treats home kitchens under current cottage food rules.

The bill defines a farm kitchen as “a kitchen located on agricultural land, including land zoned for agricultural use or land actively used for agricultural production, in which food products are prepared using ingredients that may include agricultural products grown or raised on the same farm.”

Act 195 (2024) expanded the kinds of homemade foods that Hawaii residents could sell and allowed homemade foods to be sold at retail, through the mail and over the internet, as long as they are properly labeled.

This legislation would build on Act 195 (2024) and be especially beneficial for rural entrepreneurs who do not have easy access to commercial kitchens.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

LATE



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 329
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
The Honorable Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Loy, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health

SUPPORT FOR HB2619 RELATING TO HOMEMADE FOOD PRODUCTS

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports HB2619 as it seeks to provide regulatory parity between farm kitchens and home kitchens, thereby expanding opportunities for small-scale producers to bring homemade food products to market.

Aligning the regulatory treatment of farm kitchens with that of home kitchens can help reduce barriers for farmers who wish to add value to their products on-site. This approach supports diversified agriculture, encourages local entrepreneurship, and can strengthen community food security by making it easier for consumers to access locally produced foods. National best practices suggest that clear, risk-based regulations for small food producers can promote public health while fostering economic growth in rural and agricultural communities.

The Department of Health's expertise in developing science-based regulations will be critical in balancing flexibility for producers with necessary oversight. Transparent and accessible guidance for farm kitchen operators will also be essential to ensure ease of compliance and success.

We respectfully recommend that the Department of Health engage stakeholders, including small farmers and food entrepreneurs, during rulemaking to ensure that regulations are practical and effective. Providing technical assistance and clear communication will help maximize the benefits of this legislation while upholding public health standards.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

LATE

HB-2619

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 11:38:59 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support.

HB-2619

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:18:59 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

HB-2619

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 9:26:36 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brynn Foster	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill HB2619

2/12/26

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of bill HB2619. My name is Brynn Foster, and I have worked in Hawai'i's food system for over 20 years. In that time, I've seen how having the right tools close to the farm can turn a good harvest into steady income, food on our neighbors' tables, and a stronger community we can all rely on. I am here today because regional, farm-based kitchens are a practical and necessary next step in strengthening Hawai'i's food system.

Throughout my work in food systems and community wellness, I have seen how essential it is for farmers to have practical infrastructure that allows them to process and preserve what they grow. These well-designed, food-safe kitchens that are located close to where food is cultivated can make the difference between a harvest being fully utilized or lost due to time, distance, and cost barriers.

Small farmers across our state are facing a structural barrier where they can grow food but often lack the affordable, accessible facility to process and preserve it. Driving long distances to harvest small quantities or renting commercial kitchens at high hourly rates is rarely economically viable, particularly for producers working with plants, herbs, or specialty greens. These costs can discourage value-added production altogether, even when there is strong local demand. Supporting farm-based kitchens allows farmers to generate fair income from the crops they are already growing, rather than relying on supplemental income streams such as farm tours or short-term visitor accommodations simply to sustain their operations.

Efforts are already underway across the islands to restore Indigenous ahupua'a systems and expand community-based agroforestry. These approaches recognize that food

production, watershed health, and community wellbeing are inseparable. The Maui fires were a powerful reminder that rebuilding resilient, locally rooted food systems is not only about nutrition or economic opportunity—it is also about disaster preparedness and the ability of communities to care for themselves in times of disruption. Farm kitchens can serve as small but vital hubs within these systems: places where food can be washed, processed, preserved, and shared safely and efficiently. We cannot rely on a small number of large distributors to supply entire islands under both blue and grey skies. Investing in distributed, community-scale farm kitchens builds the long-term agricultural resilience Hawai'i needs to withstand future disruptions.

I do this work because I care deeply about my community and about Hawai'i's future. Senate Bill HB2619 gives us the tools to show up for our communities in times of stability and in times of crisis. I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you,

Brynn Foster